

Kartzilamas: **Traditional Greek Cypriot Dance as a Representation of Life**

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This investigation stems from an analysis of Greek Cypriot dance conducted as a part of the thesis completed by myself for the degree MA, the title of the thesis being *Processes in the Development of Patterns Relevant to Marriage Partner Choice amongst Greek Cypriots*.¹ Other than literature, information has come from having lived the Cypriot culture, I being a Greek Cypriot, and from the bulk of data collated for the thesis, which included oral testimony from recorded histories and other sources. An additional twenty or so Greek Cypriots in Adelaide and about ten in Melbourne as well as a few people from other European countries have been questioned specifically for this paper.

For the purposes of this study "traditional dance" refers to a description: the way the people in Cyprus born between about 1900 and 1930 danced in what is regarded among Greek Cypriots as the traditional manner. It is associated with the peasant society. Averof (1989) and Tompolis (1980) have recorded the music of a range of dances with which Greek Cypriots identified. Some of the dances originated elsewhere and were also danced by other peoples. However, the ones classed as Cypriot had been transformed somewhat to give them characteristics identified as Cypriot.² Not all dances that appeared in Cyprus came to be regarded as Cypriot.

1 Moustrides, 2000:124–130.

2 The commentary in various parts of Averof (1989) makes this evident.

A number of dances stand out because a substantial number of references to them were made through oral testimony, which shows that they were widely spread in Cyprus and that they were regarded as Cypriot. This paper will focus on the *kartzilamas* but begin with a brief literature review on dance from a broad perspective followed by an examination of the meaning of *horos*, the Greek word for dance.

In view of the disappearance of most folk dance in live culture (i.e. rather than performance) and, concurrently, the imminent death of the Greek dances in the social scene, Raphtes, whose concern is the propagation of Greek dance, has suggested that research should be conducted by historians, ethnologists, sociologists and psychologists as a way of helping the dancer and the choreographer and concurrently deepen understanding of Greek society (Raphtes, 1985:18). “The many worlds of dance” can be gauged by merely examining the titles in the bibliography.³ Inherent are biological, historical and sociological factors: the human body, thought and feelings; time, events and processes; human interaction and human need; groups in society, structures, organisation and economy.

Alignment of dance to consciousness is inherent in the diversity of dance around the world through time and as seen through different cultures, different movements, fashions and different purposes of dance. According to Dean:

Dance is thought manifest through movement rhythms. [...] To dance is to confirm our deep association with the rhythm of life. [...] Dance includes the sacred and the non-sacred forms of ethnic dance which is the soul of a people expressed in movement. [...] Dance is a living history of man. It is both an art and an entertainment (Dean, 1966:9).

Dean compares the complex structures of the dance to speech:

Dance is the way man speaks in movement. It is the inner urges given outward release. The spoken languages of the world have chosen certain sounds and rules of grammar to ensure intelligent communication.

3 *The Many Worlds of Dance* is the title of Dean’s book (Dean, 1966).

Without this chosen order, speech would be only a garbled noise. Dance styles are the result of just such choices of movement grammar, each race, or region, evolving a dance communication that immediately classifies the style as belonging to that race or region (Dean, 1966:63).

Ginner, in *The Revived Greek Dance*, begins discussion of ancient Greek dancing thus: “The dance was connected to every element of Greek life. [...] Its evolution coincides with the development of the Greek race” (Ginner, 1933:1). Citing Lucian, the author adds: “The dance, being an expression through the personal medium of the body, is affected, even more strongly than the other arts, by the moral and spiritual outlook of a nation and the history which affects each individual” (Ginner, 1933:2). The direct association of dance and life, which is the theme in Raptēs (1985), is reflected in the title: *Ο Κόσμος του Ελληνικού Χορού* (*The World of Greek Dance*).

Early forms of dance are thought by some researchers to be related to religion.⁴ However, inherent in ancient cult and ritual, which focuses on themes like birth, death and regeneration, are associations with the basics of life such as needs, hopes, fears, happiness and sorrow.⁵ With reference to ancient Greece, Ginner has written: “The vintage dances foretell the Dionysian rites; the magical dances of seed-time and harvest are the forerunners of the mysteries of Eleusis, and the rituals of Adonis” (Ginner, 1933:4). From a view of the broad spectrum of art forms and in reference to man and primitive tribes, according to Mahapatra “the flowering of social and cultural meanings through the form was to him a social objective and not an aesthetic concern” (Mahapatra, 1979:102). Upon discussing *Dance, Sex and Gender* Hanna turns to instinctual

4 Dean (1966:36) suggests it originated in religion. Ioannides (in Averof, 1989:xvii) notes the transition from its religious and ceremonial character to the art form. Webster (1970:xi) refers to cult dances in Ancient Greece.

5 According to Lobley and Lobley (1980:11) “Dance has been associated with magic, religion, spectacle, ritual, drama and just plain enjoyment”. See also Kirstein (1970).

drives: “Nonhuman animals’ drive to reproduce stimulates the dramatic and colourful ritualised movement displays that are referred to as ‘mating dances’. Similarly, the impulse for dance among humans may be reproductive, *but* it is mediated by culture” (Hanna, 1988:4). Varying ways culture mediates in Cypriot dance become evident in a book on traditional Cypriot music and dance written by Averof, who, in the upward journey to higher education, participated with his father, a violinist, in traditional music/dance settings and once he had come to an understanding of Cypriot traditions and learnt the violin from his father, continued to play at such settings as a professional musician (Averof, 1989: biographical notes).

The way Cypriot dance is a representation of life is reflected in the broader meaning of *horos*, the Greek word for dance. According to Rapphies the dimensions of space that can be incorporated in the use of the word, and which are not found in the use of corresponding words of other European languages, have carried on from ancient time (Rapphies, 1985:23). Portrayal of space from the view of what human experience is all about is probably best reflected in the proverb which translated says: “whoever is outside of the dance knows many songs” or, in other words, it is easy for those outside of the experience to criticise. From my experience of Greek culture, dance, i.e. *horos*, can portray transcendental images, e.g. Greeks may dance a baby in the air, they may take someone out to the dance by gossiping or making a spectacle of them and they may go out to dance or go into a task required with fervour. The capacity for the word *horos* to incorporate elements of both transcendence and exhibition are evident in the following wedding traditions that involved lifting things up and dancing them, or in other words celebrating the preparation that had been done: by all evidence, at Greek Cypriot weddings everywhere in Cyprus people danced the bed made for the bride and groom and the linen or dowry painstakingly prepared by the bride and/or the bride’s mother and even grandmother. In parts of Cyprus the people danced the macaroni made for the wedding. In the examination of dance that will follow it may be useful to keep in mind the broader meaning of the word *horos*.

The focus of this paper is the *kartzilamas*.⁶ The *kartzilamades* or *antikristi* are a suite of female/male dances that Greek Cypriots most closely identify with.⁷ This is particularly evident from the fact that they appeared universally among the Greek Cypriot peasants,⁸ and remnants of the style and format can still be detected in today's social dance among Greek

6 In this paper Greek words will be adapted in accordance with Greek syntax.

7 The music for the suites recorded by Averof and Tompolis is as follows. In each source appear four *kartzilamades* followed by two *mpalous* for men. The repertoire recorded by Averof includes the music of a *mpalos* for women (Averof, 1989:32–49, 56–76; Tompolis, 1980:90–106).

Persons born at the turn of the nineteenth century are no longer alive but a number of informants emphasized that their predecessors only danced the *kartzilamades*. Correspondingly, a few people pointed out that in the village in their own youth the *kartzilamades* were the only dances. What became obvious in relation to this was the factor of access. The characteristics of the men's and the women's dance and the vast difference in the overall dance repertoire are seen to have developed out of the opportunity to participate. One informant for example said she didn't remember seeing people dance because they were so poor that they could not afford to go anywhere and in village life weddings were a rare occasion. The traditional dances the *drepani* (sickle), the *masieri* (knife) and the *tatsia* (sieve) were performance dances danced by males and the seclusion of villages would have limited the chances to see, learn or participate in those dances. The factor of seclusion is quite evident from when and where foreign dances appeared. Corresponding to other aspects of modernisation foreign dance appeared first in Cypriot cities and spread into the rest of Cyprus in varying degrees. Dances like the polka made only a limited appearance. In line with political and social forces schools and clubs came to teach dance through dance groups. The *kalamatianos* has come to symbolize Hellenism. Ballroom dance, which began as a mark of the elite, faded from view and the disco scene has arrived. Yet the continuation of the *kartzilamas* as indicated elsewhere in the paper is evidence of the continuity of the past in the present.

8 Men on the Greek islands surrounding Chios danced in a similar fashion and in accompaniment sang their *patinades*, the equivalent of the Cypriot poetic compositions (pers. comm., A. Litsakis, 3 Feb. 2001). The informant, a senior citizen, is married to a Greek Cypriot and has spent time in Cyprus. Furthermore, for many years he travelled all around the Greek islands and other parts of the world working as a sailor.

Correspondingly, Raphtes (1985:30–31) has cited θεσσαλονίκης Ευστάθιος (Thessalonikis Eustathios) as having referred to a dance of the Roman–Byzantine

Cypriots – the dance is characteristically a blend of what were male suites and what were female suites.⁹

Upon being questioned for this paper about traditional dance in Cyprus, every informant in the first instance referred to “Cypriot dance”. Further qualifications were then made: persons danced opposite one another as both names *kartzilamas* and *antikristos* imply, they danced in pairs and there was a set suite for the women and another for the men, i.e. a woman danced with another woman and a man danced with another man.

Testimony overall shows other aspects that stand out. For a start, with respect to family functions, professional musicians typically performed only at weddings and at these occasions the whole village as well as others from elsewhere participated. Therefore it was the wedding that gave everyone a chance to dance.¹⁰ Musicians relied on the *ploumisma*, in this case specifically being money tossed for them to play for persons to dance in turn, therefore they encouraged those present, especially the relatives, to get up and dance. The men were more involved in the dancing and tended to stay on celebrating longer than the women. What informants did not refer to (probably because the questions did not elicit it) is that the male responsibilities did not call them back to the home like female responsibilities did the women. However, they did refer to the fact that

period which broke from a circle into *antikrista* and which was accompanied by singing: established and/or spontaneous verse was sung by the group or by individuals replying to the first dancer. On page 44, the author again referred to the dance *antikristos* in relation to celebration of the nuptial engagement in Greece: At the celebration the couple first danced an *antikristos* and then a *sirtos*. As will be seen, all the patterns are repeated in Cypriot tradition.

⁹ The observation has been made by comparing oral testimony of what occurred with what has been personally observed from viewing a number of videos of weddings and participating in a wedding celebration in Cyprus in 1983.

¹⁰ This would probably have been the norm in surrounding peasant societies that were structured around the family and village life. Life in a Yugoslavian village as described by neighbours of mine certainly was very similar to that in Cyprus and weddings were the main festive occasions.

only men were likely to go off casually celebrating with their friends¹¹ and only men celebrated at fairs and folk festivals through the singing, dancing and associated poetry competitions, even though in Cypriot society poetic compositions of *tsiatista*,¹² the poetry of their peasant society, were so vibrant among both sexes and ran through every aspect of life.

According to oral testimony, females overall tended to be more reserved about dancing and they danced in a sober manner quite in contrast to the males who competed in demonstrating acrobatic skills in the dance. The female repertoire of dance was also more limited in comparison to the variety classed as male dances and this in itself is qualified through the implications of their sexual activity and the corresponding responsibilities that ultimately led to less involvement in extended celebration. *Chamilovlepouses*, the meaning of which implies looking through lowered eyes, is a term typifying female reserve and particularly refers to coming of age females: society sanctioned sexual activity only in association with marriage and reserve was a protective mechanism. Abstinence from exhibitionism was a key protective strategy. With reference to dance, informants explained that the young men competed to show off to everyone but particularly to the young women and their

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- 11 Take the example of the father of informant Evagoras Theodoridis (born in 1923 in Arsos, Lemesos): Evagoras referred to meeting places, days of celebration and the function of the village café, the common meeting place for men, when he related how upon the engagement of a young relative, his father celebrated with his friends from the Saturday until the next Wednesday, when his friends took him home in merriment to bring him to trial for neglecting his duties as a husband (pers. comm., 17 June 1993).
 - 12 The word may incorporate meanings of matching or pairing, but also inciting, and the contexts in which the poetry makes its appearance may also incorporate any number of the above meanings. Associations between the dance and the poetry/song/music have existed since the ancient past and apply to other peoples also: "All those dances that had their birth in ancient times were, like most early folk dances, performed to song" (Ginner, 1933:52). It is evident that the way of life of yesteryear was responsible for this integration. Cypriot peasants had no dance halls, discos and the like and in the village, weddings were few and far between. People created their fun with relatives, friends and in their time alone, and dance was an integral and spontaneous part of merriment.

watching families.¹³ This neither means that the young women did not compete nor that their dancing did not reveal their vitality, sexuality and youth. The term *chamilovlepouses* also implies scrutiny as when a mother fixes her eyes on her children in scrutiny of their behaviour. The tag of *chamilovlepouses* indicates not only the protective shell of female reserve but also the sharp female eye beneath.

I suggest that the sexual drive and the drive to compete for survival's sake runs right through the structures and that the characteristics of both dance and song reveal culturally channelled human drive factors in association with society's demands. There is the proud, reserved poise of the females and the vivaciousness of the males. Dancing opposite one another portrays this culturally demanded distance and the associated sexual tension. It is also indicated in that by the norms in the society the only time a man and woman danced together was in the bridal dance at their wedding ceremony (see Gennep, 1972:70 re initiation and p. 130 for a description of separation rites). The ethic is a structured boundary avoiding male/female contact in an activity that can be sexually arousing. Symbolically it represents the society's ideology of appropriate sex, i.e. sex was to be protected as a private affair between husband and wife.

The way the sexual tension is highlighted in social dance among Greek Cypriots and other Greeks particularly as observed here in Australia is what happens in the cyclic dances the *sirtos* and the *kalamatianos*, but particularly the *sirtos*. The handkerchief, or *mantili* as it is known in Greek, carries the name of the traditional female scarf: as a link with what it means to be Greek and, correspondingly, as an indispensable link between the first dancer and the group, it gives the leader space to express the self within a Greek identity. When the music and the physical, intellectual and emotional environmental space lift the dancers in ecstasy it is then you see the link broken and the leader displays his or her flair.

13 In this society scrutiny of suitors and possible future suitors was basic to the selection of marriage partners.

The second dancer's role is to coordinate. He or she virtually dances *antikri* but without actually breaking the chain. During peak experiences, the first and the second dancer break the chain and dance completely *antikri*. Moreover, at times the whole group break up and dance *antikri* in pairs or as a group. From the above perspective the *kartzilamas* represents the freedom of the individual and the space in which he or she can express this freedom. Placing the ancient form of the wedding dance against the version the peasants danced at the beginning of the twentieth century indicates that the format of standing opposite (*antikri* or *kartzin*) is a representation of the union to be, i.e. of marriage. The names of the dance tie all aspects of the dance together, and ultimately to the dance of life. To stand opposite someone, i.e. *antikri* or *kartzin*, is to face that person and in the Greek culture to be able to face someone has the utmost significance. It carries the weight of Greek cultural expectations associated with the moral code of the society.

To note further associations, as well as can be judged from oral testimony, the female suite of *kartzilamades* was played for the bride and groom to dance and as a completion of the female suite of dances at least one *sirtos*, a dance which is danced in a similar fashion by both men and women, would also have been played.¹⁴ This basically corresponds with what occurred in ancient time, as noted earlier in the paper. The most popular Cypriot *sirtos* is also called *arma choros*, the words of the accompanying song beginning, "My fine basil and marjoram, you will separate me from my mother" (Averof, 1989:50–51). Both the beginning and the song as a whole replicate the overall essence represented by the

14 The couple danced as many of the dances as they wanted to but it was common for the man to quit after two or three dances, which reflects the sense of personal space ingrained into individuals by culture and the norms in society: the groom would have felt uncomfortable dancing the female dances and dancing with a woman. A number of informants have said that even the *sirtos* was danced in the *kartzilama* style rather as a cyclic chain dance. That this was the norm everywhere in Cyprus is indicated by the continuation of the style among Cypriots.

kartzilamades and as analysed in this paper. By all indications the song was typically played as the bridal *sirtos*.¹⁵

Judging from individual testimonies at some places the couple danced on Sunday, at others on Monday and at others on Tuesday, which points to the great diversity in what actually occurred at Cypriot weddings. What is consistent in the testimonies is that as soon as the couple began to dance they were adorned with the *ploumisma*, i.e. gift tokens to them of money that were either pinned to their clothes or put in a plate placed on the floor for the purpose. While they were dancing songs were sung, either established verse or verse composed on an impromptu basis, to offer good wishes and praise to the couple and their family. This verse was quite different to the content of the variety of songs that were *kartzilamades* (see also Averof, 1989:47). Singing for the bride and groom typically began with the stanza which when translated says: “There’s a gold oil-lamp hanging at St. Anastasi. May the couple we have married live and grow old” (see also Averof, 1989:32–49).¹⁶ Averof refers to the third *kartzilamas* as the bride’s and the groom’s dance, during which the singing and adorning occurred (Averof, 1989:47). The bridal dance and accompanying best wishes in essence represent a mark on the lifeline, with the *kartzilamades* as a whole repertoire of dances being an enactment of the lifeline according to gender.

The representation referred to immediately above is evident from the

15 The dance has been referred to as the bridal *sirtos* for although, as will be clarified, the bridal dance as such refers to the third *kartzilamas* because of the singing that basically addresses the implications of the wedding, the whole suite of female dances were made available for the couple to dance. Even if the *arma choros* was not the only *sirtos* played, its popularity and the meaning of the name indicates that typically it would have been the first *sirtos*. *Armazo* means to armour but it also means to marry. It is believed that the term *arma choros* originated in the time of Homer and referred to a dance on the walls of Troy showing people dancing shoulder to shoulder a chain dance that came to be called by this name (Averof, 1989: 55).

16 The name *Anastasi* refers to resurrection, the celebration of Easter and revival or restoration to life. Overall the meaning thus depicts the prayers, hopes and dreams inherent in the nuptial bond.

content typical of the songs associated with the *kartzilamades* as well as the focus on love that predominated in the *tsiatista* which individuals competed to compose. The melody *tsiatista* were sung to varied according to locality and this is a sub-pattern that indicates the richness and diversity underlying all experience or, to use symbolism, the music and the dances sung and danced along the way. Averof has recorded three popular songs connected to the first three female *kartzilamades* and which allude to the central issue of marriage. In translation, the song accompanying the first *kartzilama* begins, “I will buy you a sewing machine proud one”. The start of the song for the second *kartzilama* is “I love you, I’ll die and I awake and don’t find you”. Following in the third *kartzilama* the voice begins, “Dance girls now you have the chance for tomorrow you will marry”. According to the author the fourth component of the suite returns in essence to the first (Averof, 1989:47).

A male voice tends to predominate in songs such as the above. This is explainable not only by the position of the *chamilovlepouses* and the accompanying reality that singers were males, but broadly from what was ultimately ceremonial courtship from competing males: they expressed the longings, desires and heartaches of love in a culture that made every effort to prevent sexual intercourse before marriage.

What becomes visible in the dance is a display of the society’s ideology of life, the central theme being marriage. The patterns show that to Greek Cypriots in essence the *kartzilamas* came to be a courtship dance and as a whole repertoire of dances represented the consciousness that expressed what it was to be a man or woman in their society. There are connections between the characteristics of the third *kartzilamas*, the position of this dance in the suite of *kartzilamades* and the characteristics of the suites as a whole.

Of the five *kartzilamades* the third female *kartzilamas*, i.e. the middle dance in the suite and the dance used to express best wishes to the bride and groom, was the only dance where the dancers danced linked with one another. At the playing of the corresponding male *kartzilamas* the men traditionally competed to compose and sing the rhyming couplet

stanzas referred to earlier in the paper, the *tsiatista* (Averof, 1989:65). In sequence, the dance transformed into a composition which was in turn interposed with a short turn of dance by each succeeding participant, this being rather the pattern of life. Typically the voice in the *tsiatista* said “I am better than you”, “my love is the most beautiful” or “mine is the deepest love”: i.e. they were love songs focusing on wooing the girls of young men’s dreams. This clearly shows that the dance is about courtship. The dance displays the strategies of each gender, the passivity of the females and the more prominent male exhibition. The tag of *chamilevpouses* indicates the cultural boundaries of the dance of female life: they looked, dreamed and schemed from a lowly position.

Equivalently, the dance must be a representation of the society’s ideologies associated with life and marriage as well as the needs that gave rise to the ideologies. Judging by the various ways the handkerchief is used in Greek tradition, it obviously portrays different symbolic functions.¹⁷ However, when held between two people it is obviously a link: in the third *kartzilama* it forms a link as youth needs to be prepared for adulthood, as a couple are brought together sexually in marriage and as people are brought together because of life’s needs, this last aspect being particularly reflected in the cooperative effort associated with the traditional Greek Cypriot wedding.

17 In Cyprus, it also seems to replace the traditional Cypriot male use of the scarf. In Cypriot peasant society of yesteryear the Greek men sported their scarf (*kouroukla*) twirled around the head in social functions, as photographs of my grandfather indicate. I remember that at times my father donned a handkerchief tied around his head at his brow. Another memorable occasion of the practice was to see nephews in Cyprus and their two friends stop to don their handkerchiefs just as they really got into a partying mood after having drunk a few drinks at a family party in Cyprus in February 1996. The women in the party had begun dancing and the men were merely talking and drinking. With the heightening of the festive atmosphere they began their *tsiatismata*, at first calling the verse across the table, and they then began to add dancing to their turn. Then, as I remember it, recordings of *kartzilamades* were put on to play and it was at this time that the handkerchiefs were put on and they began dancing opposite one another in the *kartzilama* style.

The linkage of the two females in the third *kartzilama* is one characteristic of the dance that points to the meaning of people being brought together. Another indicator is that no matter where they occurred, by tradition, competitions of *tsiatista* typically finished on a friendly note. Being the same dance as the bridal dance, i.e. the dance “dragging” the couple into the dance, suggests that both the link of the handkerchief as used in the third female *kartzilamas* and the actual dance represent the union in marriage, the “drag” of life and the coming together of people in life through the overall implications of the life cycle.¹⁸

The journey or lifeline is not only represented by the implications of the parts as referred to above. It is specifically represented in the last of the *kartzilamades*, the *mpalos*. As discussed in Averof (Averof, 1989:72–73) the dance is a type of walk and the music shows what the walk is about. The stanzas, comprised of two sets of rhyming couplets, are melancholy songs of a philosophical character and reflect the walk of life. Translated one such stanza says: “what shall I do with life even if it be doubled in length when death exists and the body will rot” (Averof, 1989:73 but also from my own experience). According to Averof (Averof, 1989:72–73) the song is drawn out in the type of song known as *amane*. The melody is constructed on an impromptu basis according to the feelings of the individual and at the end of every phrase the singer and perhaps observers interpose with short bursts of dance.¹⁹

Cypriot lore also depicts the overall symbolism of the *kartzilamades* in its own way. The story told to me by an informant²⁰ who had

18 The word “drag” has been used incorporating a technical sense to deliberately associate what has been said with the broad meaning of *sirtos*: dragged, pulled, tugged, dragged and cleared as a kiln is cleaned with a *sirtis* before the uncooked bread is placed in it; thrown as e.g. a ball; a line such as a clothes-line; lead the dance. Etymologically, the meanings of both *sirtos* and *sirtis* are derived from the verb *serno*.

19 Averof actually refers to dancers interposing with short bursts of dance but experience of the equivalent practice associated with ordinary *tsiatista* would indicate that the singer in particular would have accompanied the song with dance.

20 Pers. comm., Anna Charalambous, 24 Feb 2000.

heard of it from Cyprus but who had also read it here in Australia in a Cypriot cultural magazine has the following basic components. The choreography of the suite represents the story of the princess. The first melody/dance represents her going to see the youth she dreams of marrying (τον καλόν της – the one good for her). Her friend accompanies her because princesses are not allowed out of the palace alone. The friends collect around so the chosen one will come and talk to her. In the second part they begin to dance, imitating the preparation (sewing) of the princess's dowry. Following this each dances displaying a handkerchief as a way of showing the dowry of the princess. The celebratory atmosphere then intensifies, the representation in the dance being dancing together, linked by one handkerchief held by both and going under the kerchief and around in turn.

What the afore-mentioned story shows is a multidimensional correspondence with Cypriot life: the ethics, moral codes and interaction processes in the society as indicated above to some degree, the organisation of labour and responsibility according to gender and the corresponding socio-economics, class stratification and processes in partner selection which existed in Greek Cypriot society. Young women did talk as friends with boys but dating as such did not occur: if nothing else, being with company prevented gossip.²¹ As was noted above, girls commonly spent many years weaving and embroidering their own dowry and exhibition of the dowry formed a part of the wedding celebrations.

The only informant who referred to the movements of the hands being a representation of sewing was the above named informant. Averof describes the association thus: the female *kartzilamades* are symbolically related to the females' sewing and the parading of their work. The hand movements represent sewing (Averof, 1989:46). If there is any element of truth in the hand movements representing sewing, I see it as merely

21 The protective strategies of not going out alone and not being seen alone with men were not only used by unmarried girls, but also by adult females, particularly when, for example, a married woman's husband was absent overseas or elsewhere.

a thread of an expression of the overall aesthetics associated with the preparation of the dowry or the mythologising and ritualising of this and not as actual movements representing sewing. The judgement has been made primarily on the basis of personal observation of Cypriot traditional dance in the past by females who have either died or are now very senior citizens, but also by the essence of the dance gained from this analysis. The handkerchief and the hand movements in the dance become extensions of the body expressing the individual and the culture. From a corresponding perspective the hand movements, the tall, straight posture of both the women and the men and the dance in general are an expression that reflects the enjoyment of the body and of being alive.

In summary it seems that both the meaning of the word *horos* and the dance itself arose out of the contexts referred to in the analysis. The *kartzilamas* can be seen as ritual: layers and layers of ritual with different functions. However, connections between the dance and life, which indicate the process in the development of ritual, show it as symbolic description of processes of integration in consciousness, the ritual capturing the essence of the breath of life as perceived by a group of people. The representation of life in the *kartzilamas* shows a major pattern made up of threads moving into one another, which are themselves patterns that go into making the larger pattern but have a function of their own.

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